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EDITORIAL

The transfer of the United States Geological Survey from one administration to another is a matter of wide interest at any time, and is perhaps more than usually so at the present stage of official evolution in this country. The latter part of the administration of Major Powell and all of that of Dr. Walcott were conditioned by attempts to develop the related interests of irrigation, forestry, and so forth, and no small part of the time and strength of these administrations was given to enterprises very worthy in themselves, but not strictly geological. The Survey will have contributed much to the general good of the country by aiding in putting these related interests under scientific control, but, in the judgment of many geologists, the Survey itself has temporarily suffered in consequence, scientifically and probably financially. In the closing stages of Dr. Walcott's administration the chief of these annexations to the Survey were separated from it and the way prepared for a more strictly geological administration. Some further limitations may be wholesome, but the new administration under Dr. Smith inherits an excellent opportunity to show what can be done by an undivided devotion to the development of strictly geological work in the interest of industry, education, and science.

Just at present the attention of the country is specially alert to the future relations of federal and state functions, and this adds piquancy to the problem of the relations of the national to the state surveys. It is a hopeful sign that steps have already been taken to adjust these relations in a more satisfactory way. More fundamental than the formal relations of the national to the state surveys is the question of true interstate work with a view to general correlation and fundamental science, in contradistinction to essentially local work of an intra-state nature.

Of similar import is the question of the relations of the national survey to the institutions which produce its working talent. Of like importance is the obligation of the Survey to develop the talent it

employs by continuous work in broad, unrestricted fields, until real mastery is attained. Even more imperative is adequate provision for the close scientific oversight of each chief line of work by commanding talent, developed by a far-seeing and steadfast policy in the interests of the highest class of work.

These are only some of the large outstanding problems that give a rare opportunity to the new administration. In the solution of these, as also in the more mechanical as well as the more diplomatic problems of the Survey, Dr. Smith will have the cordial good wishes of geologists generally, and, beyond question, their help, if he chooses to draw about himself the united talent of the country.

T. C. C.

Geological surveys have recently been established in Arkansas and Colorado by the action of the legislatures of those states. Notable additions have also been made to the financial resources of the surveys of Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa. Some further favorable action is expected from legislatures still in session. In line with this there has recently been a notable increase in the facilities for geological instruction given in several of the higher institutions of learning in the same region. These correlative actions appear to indicate a marked growth of geological interest in the interior states. Co-operation between the state surveys mutually, and between these and the higher institutions of learning, has grown co-ordinately, and is a hopeful sign of further growth and strength in the future.

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